



BREAKTHROUGH

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BREAKTHROUGH UPDATE

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Rewarding Risk-taking: Barb's Buzz

When we take risks, we open up ourselves to opportunities. Breakthrough would not be the organization it is today if members, staff and board members did not take risks. Some of the major risks over the past 23 years include:

- Starting a Clubhouse Model Program in 1987, a program that was unheard of in Kansas.
- Placing one of our members, Edmund Williams, in a paid job at the Marriott in 1988. Job placement for people with mental illness was not encouraged back then.
- Starting a supported education program in 1990, which helped members finish their high school diploma, GED, and go to college.
- Spinning off the Breakthrough program from Episcopal Social Services in 1992.
- Hiring a wild social worker as the Executive Director in 1992.
- Purchasing and renovating several buildings

to accommodate program growth in 1993, 1999, and 2007.

- Encouraging members to tell their stories of recovery, knowing that some people would dishonor their testimony, while others would be inspired.
- Facing the challenges of funding cuts almost every year of our existence.

So now in 2010 we are in the midst of a recession, once again facing funding cuts and adjusting to a transition in leadership. We can take comfort in the strength of our organization and the support of our friends. We will continue to take risks that open up new possibilities. Breakthrough is an optimistic organization that utilizes the resources it is given to enhance the lives of our members. I am so proud

to be part of an organization that always looks for opportunities to help people find employment, finish school, and celebrate recovery.



Dr. Barb Andres, Executive Director



Alphonse Boutte III and other Breakthrough H.E.A.L. team members participate in a neighborhood walk.

23-mile walk and bike to kick off retirement celebration

Twenty-three.

Twenty-three is the number of years Barb Andres has been executive director at Breakthrough. It is also the number of miles she lives from Breakthrough. That number, times 10, represents how many Breakthrough members and staff have been involved in its wellness program. Finally, 23 times 1,000 represents the amount of money Breakthrough hopes to raise for wellness in the benefit walk it is holding on Friday, April 23.

The event, Retiring to Inspiring: A Bike and Walk for Wellness, is the first part of a celebration of Barb's legacy at Breakthrough. Barb will be retiring and leaving Breakthrough in

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Want to learn more about Breakthrough's programs?

Attend an **Open Door** to Independence

This one-hour presentation includes:

- a light lunch
- information and handouts
- member and staff testimonials
- a tour of Breakthrough's home!

Upcoming dates:

April 14, Noon
May 12, Noon
May 27, Noon
June 9, Noon
June 24, Noon

*All Open Doors take place at Breakthrough's facility, 1010 N. Main, Wichita, KS.

Invite your friends!

For more information or to RSVP to an Open Door, contact Jen at 316.269.2534 ext. 105 or jennifer.root@btcwichita.com

Upcoming events:

mark your calendars

H.E.A.L. Project Lunch and Learn

Friday, April 23, 2010
KU School of Medicine-Wichita

Retiring to Inspiring:
A Walk and Bike for Wellness

Friday, April 23, 2010
From 1733 SE 36th St, Newton, KS to
1010 N. Main, Wichita, KS

Independence Update

Thursday, April 29, 2010
Botanica

For more information about the H.E.A.L. Project, Independence Update, or any other story, please go to www.btcwichita.com or contact us at info@btcwichita.com or 316.269.2534.



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Fifth annual Independence Update April 29

On April 29, at 8:00 a.m., Breakthrough will hold its fifth annual Independence Update. This is a free one-hour fundraising breakfast event that will take place at Botanica.

With economic times being tough, community support is more important than ever.

"In difficult times we need to pull together and help one another; Breakthrough is passionate about that commitment," Dr. Barb Andres, executive director of Breakthrough, said.

This event allows the community to build relationships and come together to empower individuals with a mental illness through their process of recovery.

This year, the event will include several

members' testimonies of their personal experience with Breakthrough and the programs offered. 200 people are expected to be in attendance, including a special appearance by Sierra Scott, host of "It's All Good", a show on local television station KSCW, Channel 5.

"Donations received at the breakfast will go toward the operation of Breakthrough's program, including educational assistance, employment support, and wellness programs," Jen Root, development coordinator, said. "These programs are vital in supporting Breakthrough's members through their recovery process and providing them with hope to discover their dreams of

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BREAKTHROUGH

Breakthrough hosts February Final Friday

Around 200 visitors from the Wichita community come to Breakthrough to view art



Participating in a collaborative art project, Olivia McNeal paints at Breakthrough for Final Friday on Friday, February 26. The project was an artistic impression of relationship-building.

The theme for Breakthrough's February Final Friday was "The Art of Relationships." Around 200 people from the Wichita community came to view the art.

"At Breakthrough, we recognize the power of relationships and work daily to provide healthy connections for our members," Breakthrough Final Friday Coordinator Sarah Turner said. "Final Friday gives us an opportunity to promote relationships with the outside community as well as with our members through their art. We believe the positive effects are both healing and life-enhancing, particularly for someone struggling with symptoms of mental illness."

Breakthrough's Final Friday consisted of both local artists and Breakthrough colleague art.

23 cont.

July to pursue a consulting career.

"I am retiring from Breakthrough to take on some new challenges as a consultant, teacher and writer," Barb said. "I hope to be able to inspire and encourage people as they work in the nonprofit sector. Hence the label, 'Retiring to Inspiring.'"

The walk will begin at 6 a.m. at Barb's house in Newton. From there, Breakthrough members and staff will walk 6 miles, bike 12 miles and walk 5 more miles. Breakthrough colleagues will walk in shifts that they sign up for, or may walk the entire way. Vans will be transporting members to and from Breakthrough to help walk with Barb.

"The Retiring to Inspiring walk embodies all of the components that Barb and the Breakthrough colleagues have striven

for during her tenure: raising money and awareness about Breakthrough and mental illness while working together, side by side," Americorps VISTA Volunteer Dana Ellison said. "And just like everything else here at Breakthrough, it will be lots of fun while having some life-saving wellness benefits from the walking and biking."

Members who are unable to participate in the walk will be able to participate at Breakthrough. There will be pictures on Breakthrough's Twitter page (@BreakthroughKS) along the way of the walk and live streaming video of the walk.

Statistically, people suffering from a severe mental illness die 25 years younger than the rest of the population. Effective psychotropic medications often cause excessive weight gain. To help combat these

statistics, Breakthrough's H.E.A.L. Project works to provide a free service for people to learn healthy eating and exercise habits.

"Additional funding for H.E.A.L. will help with ongoing needs and demands that members request to increase their wellness," H.E.A.L. Project Coordinator Marty Quya said.

After the walk, the wellness area of Breakthrough will be dedicated at 1 p.m. There will be a naming of both the H.E.A.L. education center and wellness area. A new mural for the wellness area will also be showcased.

In the event of bad weather, the make-up date will be Monday, April 25. For further details, or to make a donation, contact Dana Ellison at 316.269.2534 ext. 164 or dana.ellison@btcwichita.com.

Independence Update cont.

leading a more independent life. We couldn't be more excited about the amount of lives we know will be changed through this event."

You can help! Breakthrough would like to invite you to help provide members with hope for recovery by attending this event. For more information about the Independence Update and to RSVP, please contact Jen Root

at 316.269.2534 ext. 105 or jennifer.root@btcwichita.com.

If you aren't able to attend this year's event but would like to support Breakthrough's programs, please contact us. Contributions can be sent to PO Box 47563, Wichita, KS 67201 or visit www.btcwichita.com to make an online donation.



Breakthrough's social club continues to grow

Social Coordinator John Slattery driven to provide worthwhile experiences for members

For most of Breakthrough Social Coordinator John Slattery's life, he has been in some type of social service. From camp counseling to working in corrections with juvenile offenders, he always had a calling towards helping people.

Now, John is best known at Breakthrough for his quirky "commercials" advertising social events and his even more entertaining costumes he wears to social club dances.

"John knows exactly how to make everyone laugh and have a good time," Member Tony Scimeca said. "He's a funny guy, and he's really good at what he does."

Underneath the eccentric costumes, however, lies a more important reason for the social club program: to provide a safe and fun place for Breakthrough members to feel part of a family and community.

"My philosophy for social club is to have all the members participate as friends, to gain opportunities they wouldn't normally have, and to fulfill new dreams and desires for them," John said.

John is able to provide these opportunities for members through a few techniques, one of which involves utilizing members' ideas and talents. Member Jeff Waters, who shares a cooking interest with John, is a prime example of this.

"Since he lets me cook with him for social club, John provides an outlet for me to be able to learn new food skills and to experiment with different types of food preparation," Jeff said. "John is not only fun; he's a listener. He will ask my opinion and make decisions based on what I say. In that way, he makes me feel like I matter."

Another way John is able to help members

is by providing them with opportunities they would not otherwise have.

"John makes sure that the socials every month have great variety," Member Gloria Mabry said. "I really appreciate John for what he does, because he considers everyone's interests. He does the best he can to make sure everyone can take part in a social for the week."

John is able to provide variety by making the socials cost-effective, as Breakthrough subsidizes the price of the events for members. As a result, members have been able to experience a wide range of events, from live plays and performances to monster

truck shows and car races.

"I have always wanted to provide a lot of options for socials so everyone feels like they can belong and be entertained," John said. "At the end of the day, I want the members to be able to bond with each other when they would otherwise be isolating. I want them to feel like they are wanted."

Numbers show that John's efforts have paid off. In

February of this year, 162 members attended socials. That is an increase from February of 2009, when 123 members attended and 2008, when 122 members attended.

"We've been able to grow a lot by offering the wide-range of events and also from members working side-by-side with me to promote the socials," John said. "They help make our flyers, videos and calendars."

John's side-by-side relationships with members are what continue to make him not only popular and fun, but also a success in terms of Breakthrough's clubhouse philosophy.

"John has a great ability to put everyone at ease," Gloria said. "He does this along with providing the opportunity to make new



Painting during an art class at Breakthrough, Social Coordinator John Slattery works on a mural with young adult members.

John has found working with Breakthrough socials to be a rewarding experience not only for the members, but also for himself.



friends and have a sense of community; things that most people take for granted and don't recognize the power of."



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